

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 021930Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9073
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 10167

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PDIP, PEPR, AF, GW
SUBJECT: FOREIGN OFFICE VIEW OF NEW AFGHAN REGIME

REF: BONN 8279

1. WITH INFORMATION ON THE INTERNAL 'SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN STILL FRAGMENTARY, THE FOREIGN OFFICE PLANS TO SEND A SENIOR OFFICIAL TO KABUL FOR A FIRST HAND LOOK AT THE NEW GOVERNMENT. PRELIMINARY THINKING HERE, AT LEAST AT THE WORKING LEVEL, IS THAT THE INCLINATION OF SOME IN THE WEST TO WRITE OFF AFGHANISTAN AS AN INCIPIENT SOVIET SATELLITE IS PREMATURE.

2. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS INFORM US THAT THE FRG EMBASSY IN KABUL HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ARRANGE WITH THE GOA FOR A VISIT IN MID-JUNE BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRE-
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TARY PETERSEN. THE PROSPECTIVE VISIT IS A FACT-FINDING MISSION AS WELL AS A DEMONSTRATIVE GESTURE OF GERMAN DESIRE TO CONTINUE BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH THE NEW REGIME. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS ARE RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC ON THE LATTER POINT. THEY NOTE THAT SENIOR AFGHAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING TARAKI AND KARMAL, HAVE ASSURED THE FRG EMBASSY THAT THEY WISH TO CONTINUE GOOD RELATIONS

WITH BONN. AFGHAN OFFICIALS SEEM KEEN ON MAINTAINING THE WIDE RANGE OF GERMAN AID PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY INCLUDING PAKITA AND THE MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS.

3. OUR WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS NOW FEEL THAT THE FRG, ALONG WITH OTHERS IN THE WEST, MAY HAVE JUDGED THE NEW LEADERSHIP PREMATURELY. THEY BELIEVE THERE WAS A TENDENCY TO WRITE-OFF THE NEW REGIME AS A SATELLITE OF MOSCOW. WHILE THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT TARAKI AND KARMEL ARE DRAWING KABUL CLOSER TO MOSCOW, THESE OFFICIALS ARGUE THAT THE HISTORIC NATIONALISM OF THE AFGHANS MAY, IN THE LONG TERM, RESULT IN A MORE NATIONALISTIC COURSE. THEY BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT THE WEST ATTEMPT TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE NEW LEADERS SO AS NOT TO FORECLOSE THEIR OPTIONS.

4. OUR CONTACTS EXPRESSED A STRONG DESIRE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH US ON AFGHANISTAN AND REQUESTED, IN PARTICULAR, THAT WE PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE SITUATION PRIOR TO PETERSEN'S MID-JUNE VISIT.
STOESSEL

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